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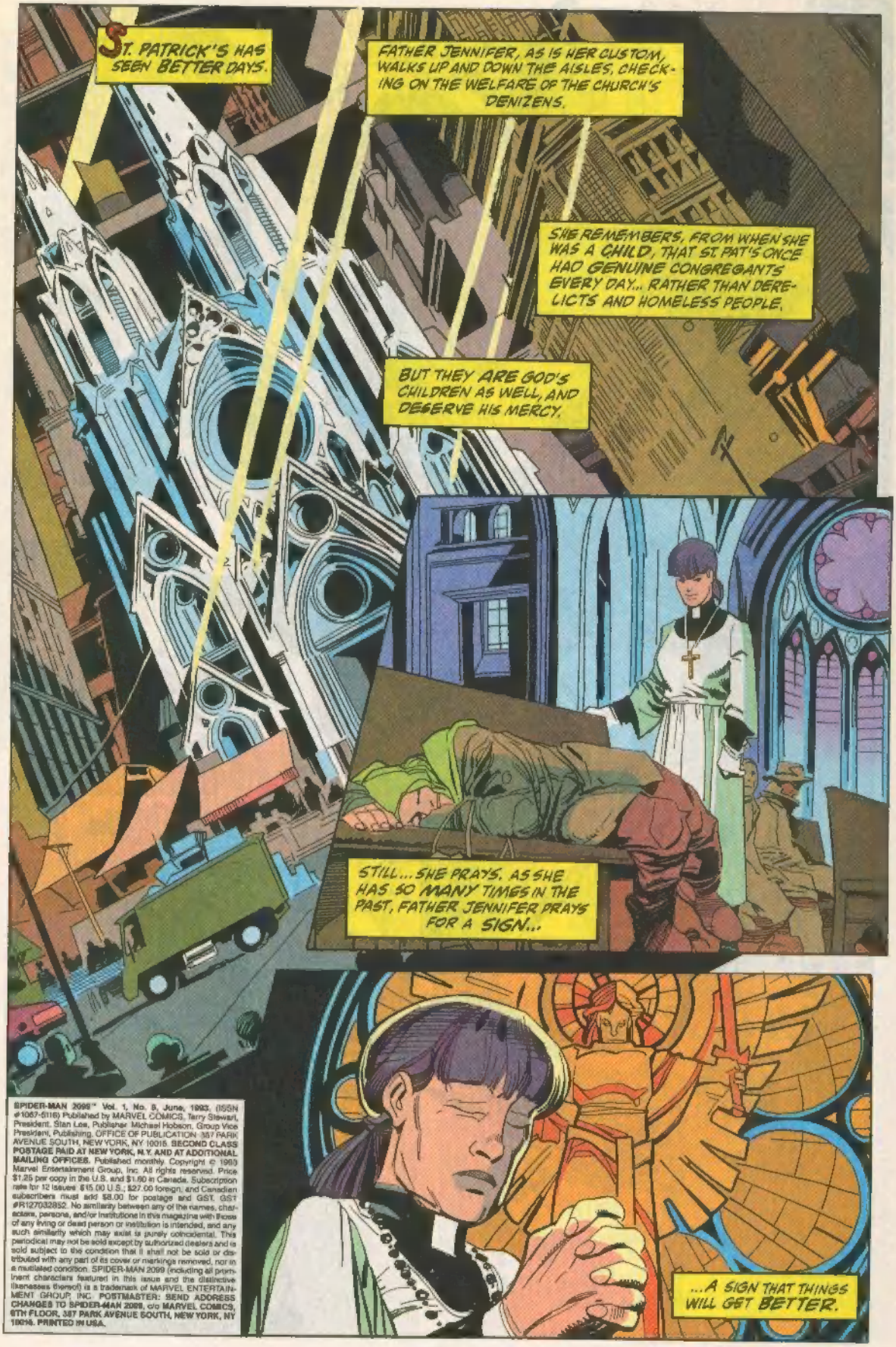
2099
ATTACK OF THE FREAKERS


ST. PATRICK'S HAS SEEN BETTER DAYS.
FATHER JENNIFER, AS IS HER CUSTOM, WALKS UP AND DOWN THE AISLES, CHECKING ON THE WELFARE OF THE CHURCH'S DENIZENS.
SHE REMEMBERS, FROM WHEN SHE WAS A CHILD, THAT ST. PAT'S ONCE HAD GENUINE CONGREGANTS EVERY DAY... RATHER THAN DERELICTS AND HOMELESS PEOPLE.
BUT THEY ARE GOD'S CHILDREN AS WELL, AND DESERVE HIS MERCY.
STILL... SHE PRAYS. AS SHE HAS SO MANY TIMES IN THE PAST, FATHER JENNIFER PRAYS FOR A SIGN...
...A SIGN THAT THINGS WILL GET BETTER.

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AND THEN SHE HEARS IT... THE FLAPPING OF GREAT WINGS.
FOR ONE GLORIOUS MOMENT, SHE DARES TO EMBRACE A MIRACLE. SHE DARES TO BELIEVE HER PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED.
SHE'S RIGHT.
IT JUST WASN'T THE ANSWER SHE WANTED.
STAN LEE PRESENTS!
FLIGHT OF FANCY
PETER DAVID WRITER
RICK LEONARDI PENCILS
AL WILLIAMSON INKS
RICK PARKER LETTERS
STEVE BUCCELLATO COLOR
JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

ELSEWHERE...
NICE SHOOTING THERE, O'HARA.
WELL, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE SNUCK UP BEHIND ME AND SCARED ME! CRIPES, ALL THAT BLOOD...!
WELL, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE HAD A GUN IN THE FIRST PLACE! IF YOU WEREN'T SUCH A LOUSY SHOT, I'D HAVE A BULLET IN MY BRAIN INSTEAD OF JUST A FLESH WOUND.
HOW WAS A SHOT AT YOUR HEAD A THREAT TO YOUR BRAIN, KASEY?
OH, YOU'RE A RIOT, O'HARA.
OWW! WATCH THAT!
WHERE'D YOU GET A GUN, ANYWAY?
OFF SOME THORITE NUT WITH AN ATTITUDE. A "FENDERS" OR SOMETHING.
A FENRIS? YOU TOOK A GUN OFF A FENRIS?!
WOW.
OKAY, O'HARA. I'M OFFICIALLY IMPRESSED.
YEAH, WELL...AHEM!... I HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO HANDLE MYSELF PRETTY WELL IN A FIGHT.

I SAW YOUR BROTHER, BY THE WAY.
HERE? YOU SAW HIM HERE, IN DOWN-TOWN?!
A LILY-WHITE CORPORATE BOY LIKE HIM? WHY WOULD HE BE RUNNING AROUND DOWN HERE?
NO... NO, OF COURSE NOT. MIGGY WOULDN'T BE.
NO, IT WAS DURING ALCHE-MAX'S ATTEMPT TO USE ME FOR A GUINEA PIG. I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT SOMETIME...
BUT FIRST, WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME WHAT THE SHOCK YOU'RE DOING DOWN HERE?
WELL... uh...
BAM BAM
KASE! IT'S RAFF! OPEN UP!
IT'LL HAVE TO WAIT, GABE. I TOLD SOME FRIENDS TO MEET ME HERE.
THERE'S SOMETHING WE GOTTA TAKE CARE OF.
I'M WARNIN' YA... THEY'RE KIND'A SCRUFFY.
THEN AGAIN, SOMEONE WHO DISARMS FENRIS WOLVES SHOULDN'T BE FAZED BY MY CREW.
uh...
SHOCK, NO.

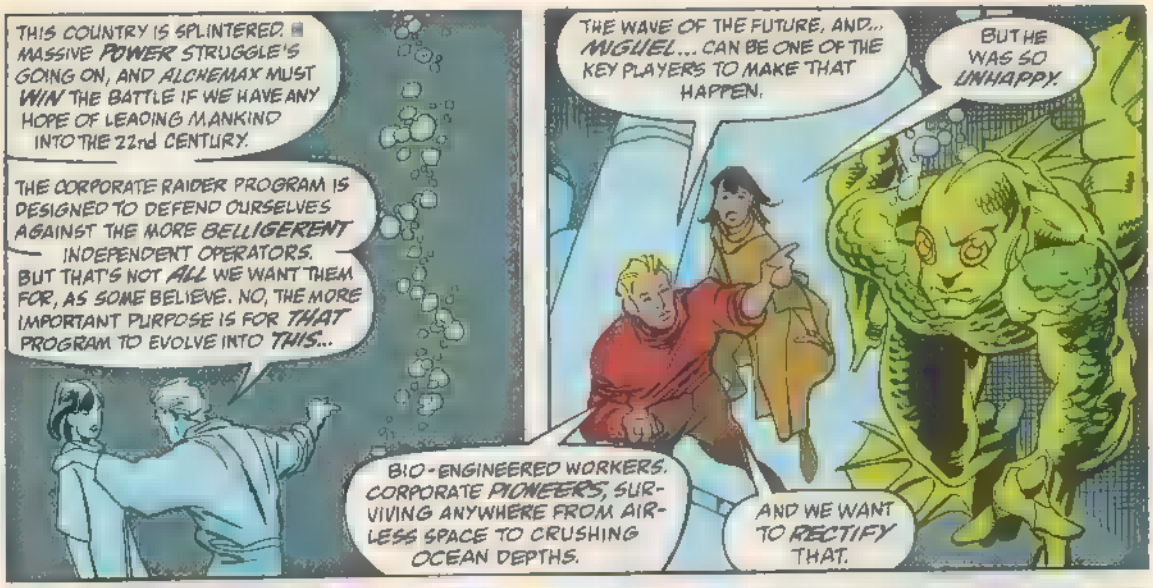
HERE TO OFFER SOME FINAL PRAYERS, SPIDER-MAN? HAVEN'T YOU HEARD..?
THERE'S NO GOD ANYMORE. ALCHEMAX BOUGHT OUT THE FRANCHISE AND FIRED HIM.
GET OUT! DEAR LORD, THIS IS A HOLY PLACE!
GET OUUUUUT!
OH, PERFECT. NOW I'M DESECRATING A CHURCH.
BAD ENOUGH I'M A LAPSED CATHOLIC. NOW I GET TO BURN AS WELL.

I'M DOING THE BEST I CAN, FATHER!
MY MY...YOU SOUND UPSET. HAVE WE FINALLY FOUND SOMETHING YOUR LITTLE HEART BEATS FOR BESIDES YOUR BELOVED CORPS?
AH, THE SMELL OF HYPOCRISY PEEE-EWW!!
I'LL TAKE THE HONEST STENCH OF ROTTING MEAT ANY DAY.
TELL YOU WHAT, S-MAN. I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR PRETTY LITTLE VICTORY. LEAVE THE CHURCH, IF YOU DARE.
FACE ME.
FACE THE FREAKERS.
...IF YOU'VE GOT THE STONES.

Ohhhh....
I THINK NOT.
I THINK SO!
AND WHAT I SAY... GOES!
SO...
...GO!
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS! IF YOU WOULD BE SO KIND--!
THOUGHT IT'D BE EASY, HUH, SPIDER-MAN?!
YOU'RE DEAD!
THEY'VE GOT IT BACKWARDS. DYING WOULD BE EASY.
DANA, BABE... WHEREVER YOU ARE...IF I DON'T MAKE IT BACK... I'M SORRY FOR SCREWING US UP SO BAD.

ELSEWHERE...
WELCOME TO MARS ONE, DANA. OUR PROTOTYPE MARS COLONY.
THIS IS INCREDIBLE, Mr. STONE...
AH AH AH. WHAT DID I SAY..?
OH. RIGHT. TYLER. YOU CAN ACTUALLY BUILD SOMETHING LIKE THIS, TYLER?
WE HAVE IT ON THE DRAWING BOARDS EVEN NOW. BELIEVE ME, WE SHOULD BE FURTHER ALONG.
IF TECH HAD DEVELOPED IN A STRAIGHT LINE FROM THE 20TH CENTURY, WE'D BE IN OTHER SOLAR SYSTEMS BY NOW. BUT OF COURSE THERE WAS THAT UGLY BUSINESS AT THE END OF THE HEROIC AGE, AND...
OH, BUT WHY REHASH ANCIENT HISTORY? CHECK THIS...

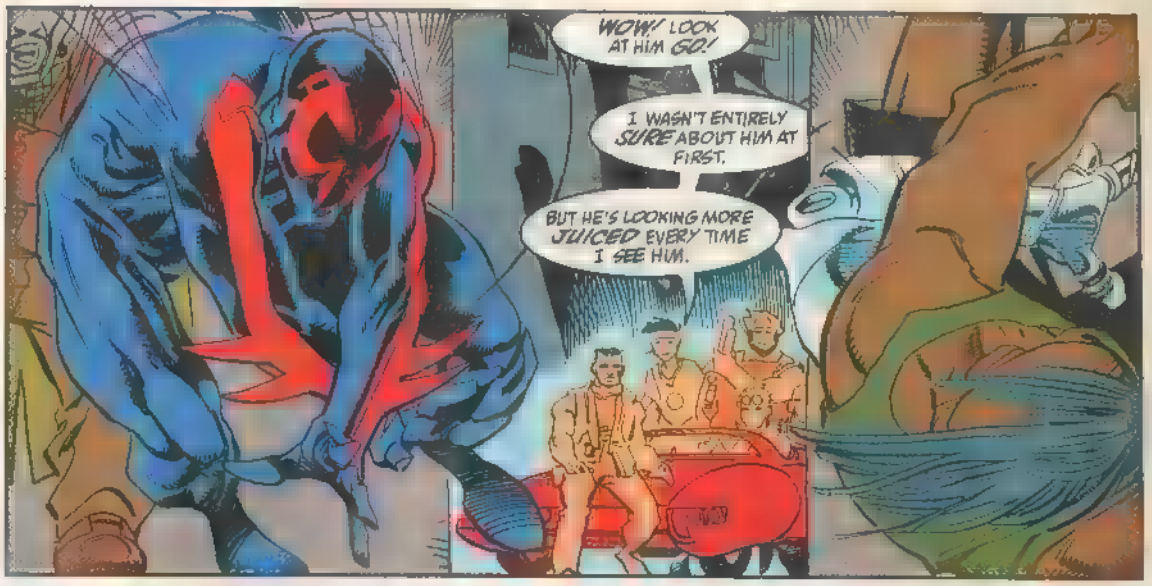
ATLANTIS, A DIVISION OF ALCHEMAX, OF COURSE.
THE RECLAMATION PROJECT IS WELL UNDER WAY. WE ANTICIPATE ATLANTIS BEING A MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTION IN ANOTHER DECADE OR SO.
AND THIS IS THE SORT OF THING MIGUEL IS INVOLVED WITH?
THAT'S RIGHT. MIKE'S INVOLVEMENT IN--
YOU KNOW... HE HATES THAT YOU CALL HIM "MIKE."
HOW ODD. HE NEVER MENTIONED THAT.
AS I WAS SAYING, MIKE'S INVOLVEMENT IN BIO-ENGINEERING IS CRUCIAL, DANA.

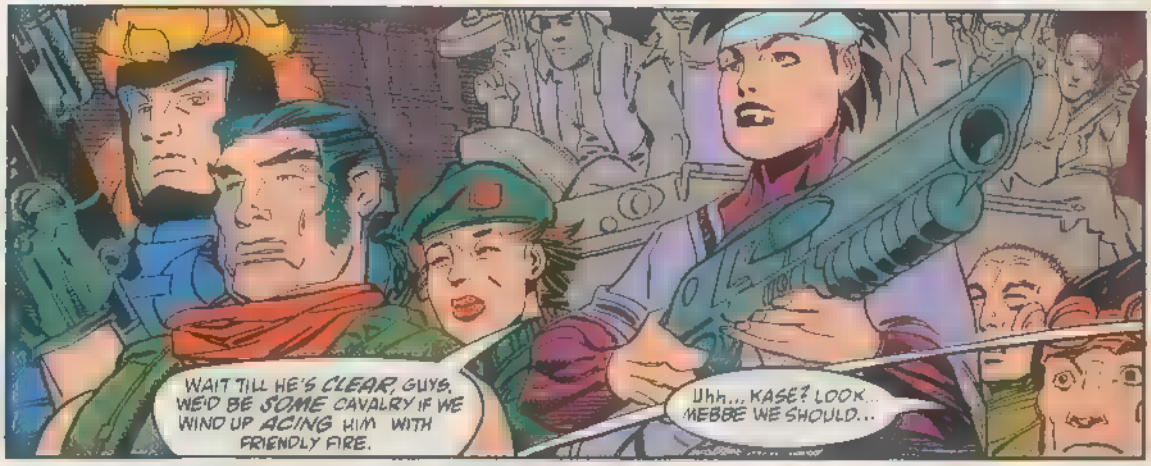

THIS COUNTRY IS SPLINTERED. A MASSIVE POWER STRUGGLE'S GOING ON, AND ALCHEMAX MUST WIN THE BATTLE IF WE HAVE ANY HOPE OF LEADING MANKIND INTO THE 22nd CENTURY.
THE CORPORATE RAIDER PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO DEFEND OURSELVES AGAINST THE MORE BELLIGERENT INDEPENDENT OPERATORS. BUT THAT'S NOT ALL WE WANT THEM FOR, AS SOME BELIEVE. NO, THE MORE IMPORTANT PURPOSE IS FOR THAT PROGRAM TO EVOLVE INTO THIS...
BIO-ENGINEERED WORKERS. CORPORATE PIONEERS, SURVIVING ANYWHERE FROM AIRLESS SPACE TO CRUSHING OCEAN DEPTHS.
THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE, AND... MIGUEL... CAN BE ONE OF THE KEY PLAYERS TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN.
BUT HE WAS SO UNHAPPY.
AND WE WANT TO RECTIFY THAT.

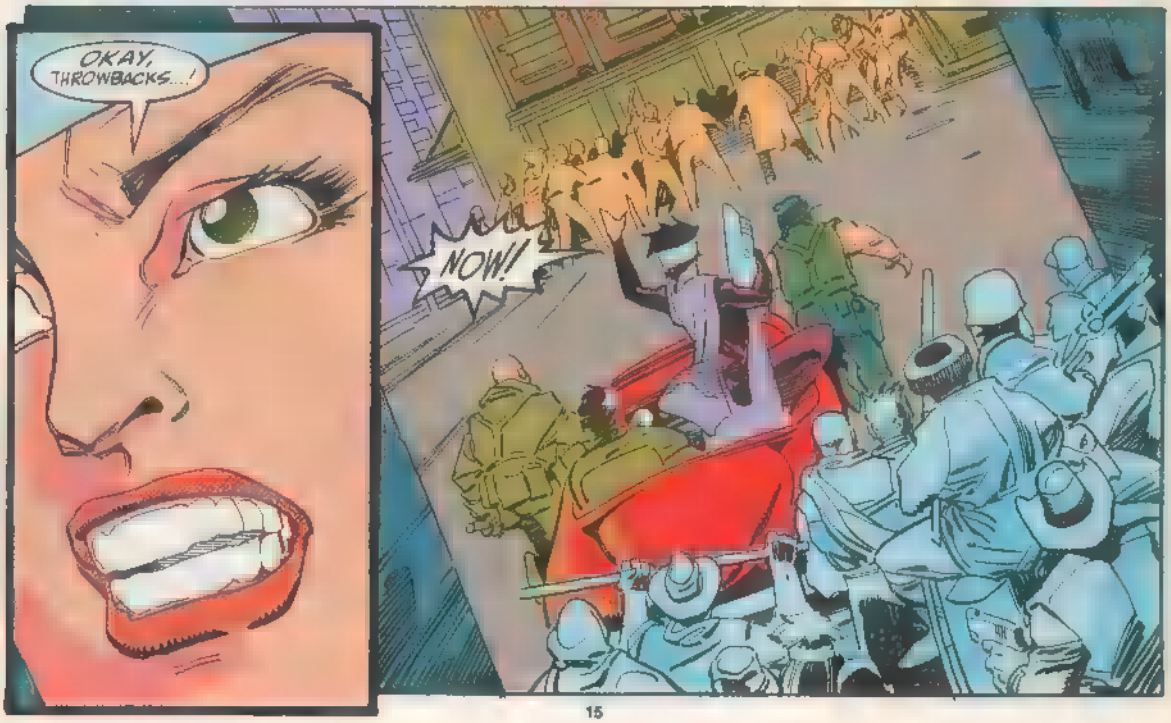
Hmmm, YOU'RE AN ASSISTANT IN THE NEW MARKET AGRO DEPARTMENT AT SYNTHIA EAST, AREN'T YOU?
WHY... YES.
DEVELOPING RESOURCES SO FOOD CAN [redacted] GROWN IN HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS IS GOING TO BE MAJOR, DANA. THIS OPENS A BRAVE NEW WORLD FOR SYNTHIA.
AND THERE WILL [redacted] OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCOUNT EXECS ATTACHED TO THE PROJECT. SMART EXECS... LIKE YOU, DANA. I KNOW PEOPLE AT SYNTHIA, AND...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, Mr. STONE?
I'M SAYING THAT IF THE PROJECTS GO FORWARD, WE CAN ALL BENEFIT. BUT IF THINGS GO WRONG WE'RE LEFT WITH...
NOTHING.
THAT'S ALL I'M SAYING.

KRAK
OFF!!
GET OFF OR I'LL...
GET...
... I'LL KILL YOU!
WELL!
AREN'T WE BECOMING MR. TOUGH!
WE BEEN WATCHIN' THE S-MAN.
FOR 'XAMPLE... I SAW HOW YOU SHOT THAT WEBBIN' OUT YOUR WRIST... SO IF I HOLD IT LIKE THIS HERE, YOU CAN'T DO THAT.
AND WE WATCHED YOU TAP DANCIN' AROUND PEOPLE, 'STEADA STOMPIN' ON THEIR FACES. "I'LL KILL YOU?" IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE GETTIN' WISE TO THE WORLD, KID.

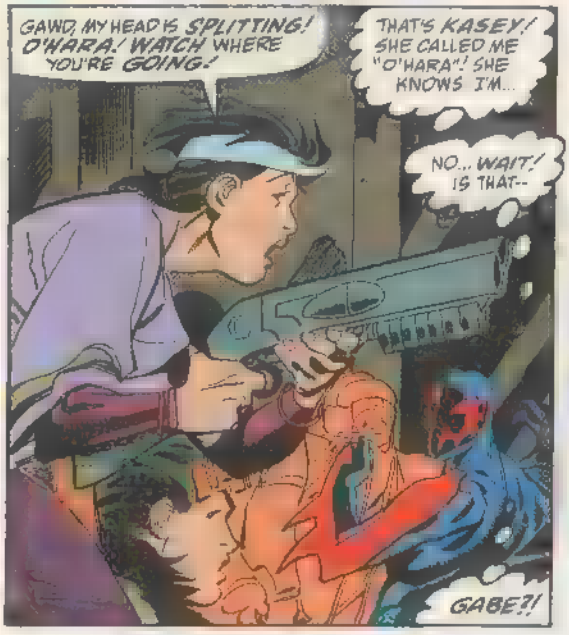
HOLD HIM STEADY, SERGEANT!
I LOVE A GOOD FILET!
EEEYOWWWW
APOLOGIES, SERGEANT.
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT. I WASN'T IN THE MOOD FOR RUMP ROAST.
ZZZWOOSH!


WOW! LOOK AT HIM GO!
I WASN'T ENTIRELY SURE ABOUT HIM AT FIRST.
BUT HE'S LOOKING MORE JUICED EVERY TIME I SEE HIM.

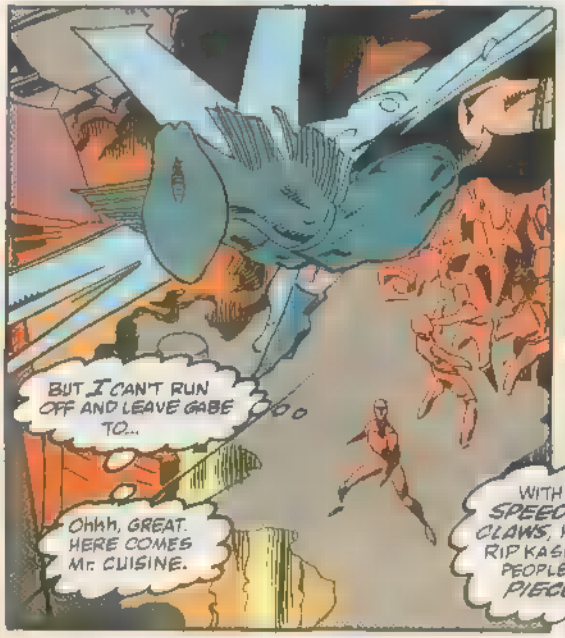

WAIT TILL HE'S CLEAR, GUYS. WE'D BE SOME CAVALRY IF WE WIND UP ACING HIM WITH FRIENDLY FIRE.
Uhh... KASE? LOOK... MEBBE WE SHOULD...


OKAY, THROWBACKS...!
NOW!

AKKKKKHH!
Huh?


GAWD, MY HEAD IS SPLITTING! O'HARA! WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
THAT'S KASEY! SHE CALLED ME "O'HARA"! SHE KNOWS I'M...
NO... WAIT! IS THAT--
GABE?!

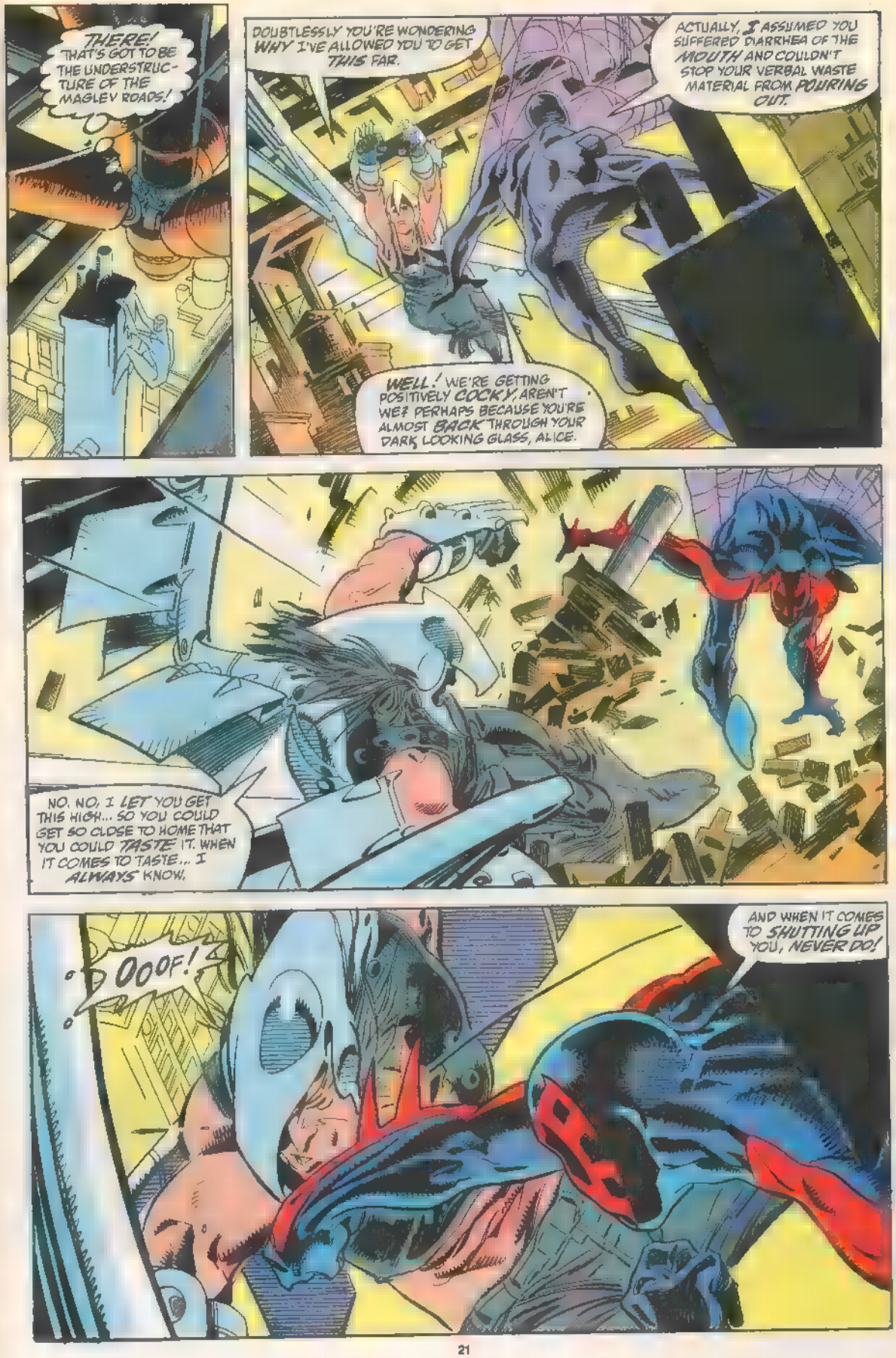
OKAY, S-MAN! YOU SOFTENED 'EM UP FOR US! WE GOT 'EM UNDER CONTROL! TAKE OFF!!
DIDN'T YOU HEAR HER, MAN? MOVE IT!


BUT I CAN'T RUN OFF AND LEAVE GABE TO...
Ohhh, GREAT. HERE COMES Mr. CUISINE.

WITH HIS SPEED AND CLAWS, HE'LL RIP KASEY'S PEOPLE TO PIECES.
UNLESS I CAN DRAW HIM AWAY.

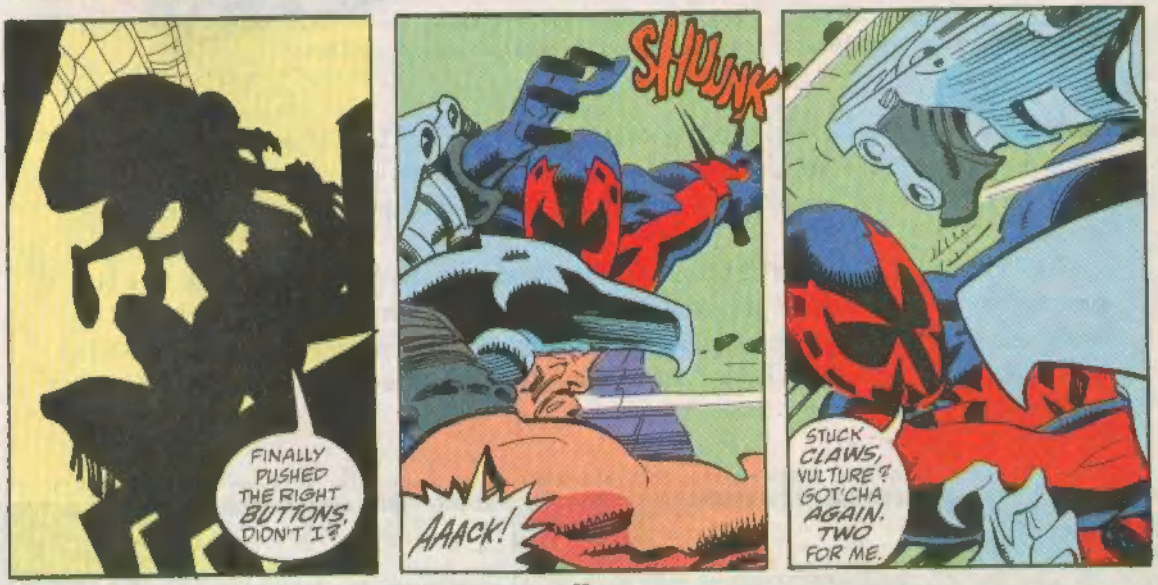
O'HARA! WHAT'RE YOU DOING? YOU'RE BACKING THE CAR UP!
I KNOW! I... I JUST DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU GET HURT!
ME? WHAT ABOUT GUYS LIKE SPIDER-MAN?
RISKING HIS NECK JUST TO HELP PEOPLE. NO ALLIES. NO WEAPONS. JUST GUTS, STRENGTH, SOME WEIRD POWERS...
AND THE TIGHTEST LITTLE BUTT I'VE EVER SEEN.

YOU SEEM TO HAVE ACQUIRED SOME ENTHUSIASTS, SPIDER-MAN.
I CAN'T SAY I'M SURPRISED.
ANYTHING THAT'S DIFFERENT, NOVEL, IS CERTAIN TO DRAW FOLLOWERS, ACOLYTES, DEMENTED HOBBYISTS, IN A WAY.
THE QUESTION IS, OF COURSE, WHETHER THE NEW ITEM ON THE MARKET MAINTAINS ITS STATURE ONCE THE NOVELTY HAS WORN OFF..
...OR DOES IT BECOME MERELY ANOTHER PASSING FANCY?
WHICH WILL YOU BE, S-MAN? Hmmm? WILL YOU BE A MOMENTARY DIVERSION? OR WILL YOU SLICE YOURSELF OUT A PIECE OF THE MARKET SHARE PIE?


THERE! THAT'S GOT TO BE THE UNDERSTRUCTURE OF THE MAGLEV ROADS!
DOUBTLESSLY YOU'RE WONDERING WHY I'VE ALLOWED YOU TO GET THIS FAR.
ACTUALLY, I ASSUMED YOU SUFFERED DIARRHEA OF THE MOUTH AND COULDN'T STOP YOUR VERBAL WASTE MATERIAL FROM POURING OUT.
WELL! WE'RE GETTING POSITIVELY COCKY, AREN'T WE? PERHAPS BECAUSE YOU'RE ALMOST BACK THROUGH YOUR DARK LOOKING GLASS, ALICE.
NO, NO, I LET YOU GET THIS HIGH... SO YOU COULD GET SO CLOSE TO HOME THAT YOU COULD TASTE IT. WHEN IT COMES TO TASTE... I ALWAYS KNOW.
OOOF!
AND WHEN IT COMES TO SHUTTING UP YOU, NEVER DO!

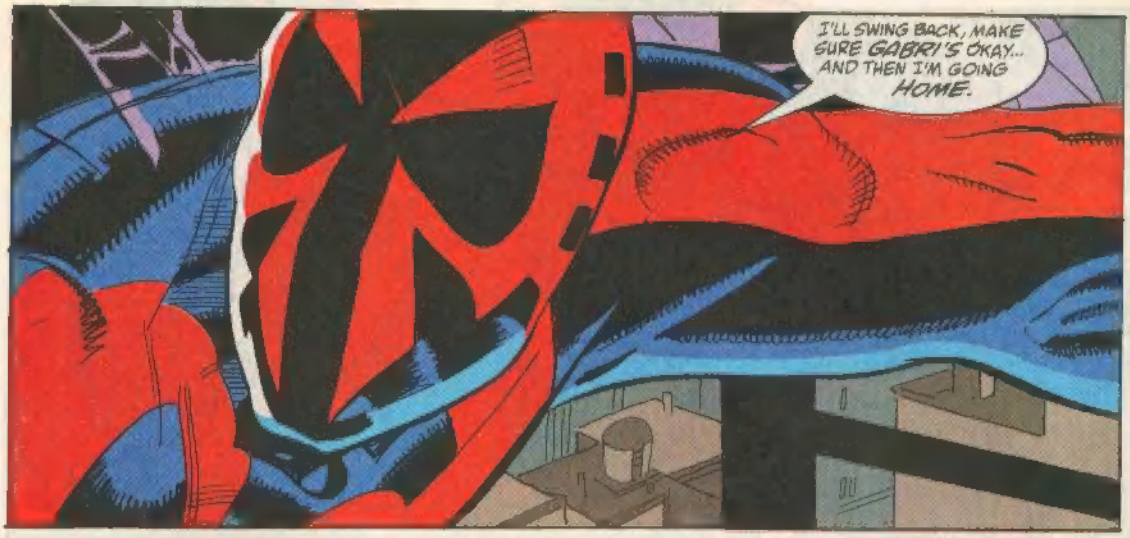
HAH! GOT'CHA!
FOR ALL YOUR LIP, VULTURE, FOR ALL YOUR POSTURING...
...REMEMBER THAT RIGHT NOW, YOU'RE HELPLESS, AND I COULD GUT YOU FROM CROTCH TO STERNUM IF I FELT LIKE IT.
NOT SO HIGH AND MIGHTY NOW, HUH?
YOU'RE JUST AFRAID TO GET NEAR ME!
AND [illegible]NG AFRAID IS THE FIRST SMART THING TO GO THROUGH YOUR HEAD TODAY!

AH! AND HERE'S YOUR SECOND CLEVER THING. HIDING IN THE BELLY OF THE UPTOWN BEAST, FIGURING I HAVEN'T GOT ROOM TO FLY, SO WE'LL BE EQUAL.
WE'LL NEVER BE EQUAL, SPIDER-MAN! I'LL ALWAYS BE YOUR SUPERIOR!
BECAUSE YOU HATE WHAT YOU ARE! AND I LOVE WHAT I AM! I SAVOR IT! I REJOICE IN IT!
AND FROM THAT REJOICING COMES STRENGTH IN CHARACTER AND PURPOSE THAT YOU'LL NEVER KNOW!
COWARD! I PITY YOU.
YOU WERE TOO SMALL A CATCH. I WOULD HAVE THROWN YOU BACK ANYWAY!
THAT WOMAN... KASEY... NOW SHE LOOKED LIKE A TENDER MORSEL. VERY TEN--
Aha!

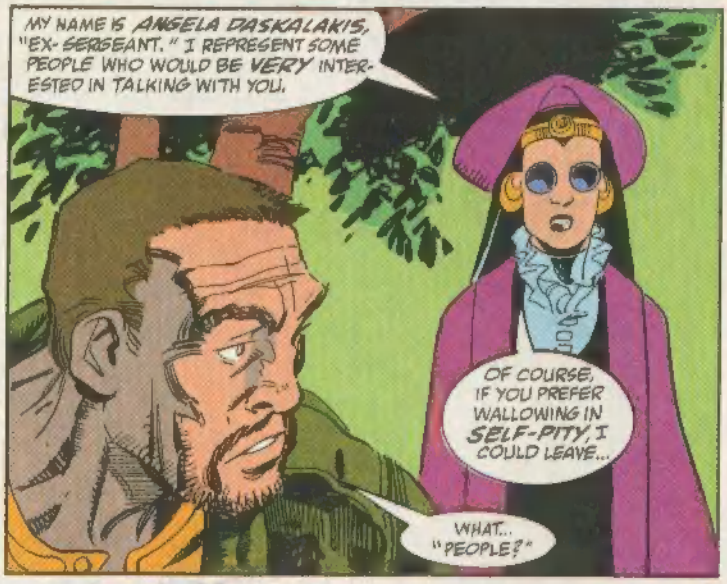

FINALLY PUSHED THE RIGHT BUTTONS, DIDN'T I?
SHUNK
AAACK!
STUCK CLAWS, VULTURE? GOT'CHA AGAIN. TWO FOR ME.

TAKE YOUR TIME. I'LL WAIT. COME AFTER ME WHEN YOU CAN.
...IF YOU'VE GOT THE STONES.
YOU WON'T WIN, SPIDER-MAN! BECAUSE WHEN IT'S ALL SAID AND DONE...
...YOU'RE STILL A CORPORATE DUPE! BUT I'M--
HUH?! WHERE--?!
WHAT YOU ARE IS A PARASITE WITH A VOCABULARY!
A LEECH WITH DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR!
STRIKE THREE, YOU VOMITOUS CRETIN!
WAAAM
YOU'RE OUT!

DID IT! KNOCKED HIM COLD!
NOW I JUST SNAG HIM WITH MY WEBBING BEFORE HE WINDS UP A BLOODY SMEAR ON...
...ON...


I'LL SWING BACK, MAKE SURE GABRI'S OKAY... AND THEN I'M GOING HOME.

UPTOWN...
SERGEANT ESTEVEZ.
EX-SERGEANT.
WHO THE SHOCK WANTS TO KNOW?


MY NAME IS ANGELA DASKALAKIS, "EX-SERGEANT." I REPRESENT SOME PEOPLE WHO WOULD BE VERY INTERESTED IN TALKING WITH YOU.
OF COURSE, IF YOU PREFER WALLOWING IN SELF-PITY, I COULD LEAVE...
WHAT... "PEOPLE?"

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU GET BACK AT TYLER STONE... AND SPIDER-MAN.
SPIDER-MAN'S DEAD.
HE'S BEEN SPOTTED DOWNTOWN, ALIVE AND KICKING.

I TAKE IT YOU'RE INTERESTED?
INTERESTED? LADY...
...YOU MIGHT BE THE ANSWER TO MY PRAYERS.